

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application. Please amend claim 4 so that the current status of all claims is as follows:

**Listing of Claims:**

1. (previously presented) A gemstone having a micro-discrete indicia formed on a surface of said gemstone wherein said micro-discrete indicia image was formed using near-field optics, wherein said micro-discrete indicia image has a length no greater than about 10 microns and a height no greater than about 2 microns, said gemstone having an altered color at the location of said micro-discrete indicia without ablating the surface of said gemstone, said altered color resulting from said near-field optics forming said micro-discrete indicia image.

2. Cancelled

3. Cancelled

4. (currently amended) The gemstone according to claim 1, wherein ~~in~~ said micro-discrete indicia is provided at [a] predetermined coordinates on said gemstone.

5. (previously presented) The gemstone according to claim 1, wherein said micro-discrete indicia provides information with regard to said gemstone.

6. (previously presented) The gemstone according to claim 5, wherein said information comprises any of the following:

size, type, manufacturer, retailer, owner, producer, country of origin, mine.